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When the Climb Gets Tricky
What happens when the ladder to success conflicts with time-honored professional ethics?
By Frank H. Andorka Jr.

Will OSHA Come A Knocking?
Probably not, but that doesn't mean OSHA isn't concerned with what's going on under your maintenance facility's roof.
By Larry Aylward

Missing in Action: Mechanics
Golf course equipment technicians are highly trained, highly educated and make a good buck. So how come they're as scarce as top presidential candidates?
By Curt Harler

Liable for Loot?
Sorting through the overtime issue.
By Raymond G. Cordelli

Myrtle Beach's Battle Royale
The competition for golfers just got tougher in this crown jewel of golf resort venues.
By Larry Aylward

Golfdom Duz N'awlins
Is golf business or pleasure? The GCSAA show provided a little bit of both.
By Golfdom Staff
Getting to the Root of Weed Control

Scientists have tried for years to understand how plant roots grow downward. Now, MIT geneticists have isolated the gene responsible, suggesting the potential for new herbicides that will wipe out weeds without hurting the environment.

By Douglas Page

Putting the Kibosh on Clover

As this weed rears its ugly head, here are tips on how to control it.

By Frank H. Andorka Jr.

cover story

Our report on vital industry employment issues will assist you in developing a model work force.

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Pretty Damn Important

Congratulations on your recent article on PDI (February). It was both informative and neutral — not easily attained with such a controversial subject.

PDI could be a wonderful program as long as it’s available to all members. When I reflect back on my own career, I have ridden the roller coaster of career highs and lows. I was a superintendent at two separate golf courses for 13 years after graduating from the Penn State University turf program. I desperately wanted to move up into bigger jobs, but I just wasn’t postured for those positions. Then Paul Latshaw (the superintendent at Augusta National at the time) threw me a rope, and I became his assistant. My career path has changed ever since. With all I learned from Paul and working at Augusta, I was able to explore and reach plateaus that I had only dreamed of.

Not many people are as fortunate as me. I would like to think that PDI could be the rope that helps good superintendents at obscure, low-budget clubs reach their dreams and high plateaus. If I could be convinced that this is in fact the case for PDI, then count me in, and I’ll put every ounce of my energy behind it.

Matthew G. Shaffer
Superintendent, The Country Club Pepper Pike, Ohio

I'm a 30-year-old superintendent at a mid-level private club in central New York. I'm not living in the national limelight of a Major, a PGA Tour stop or an LPGA event. I'm the average Joe of our profession.

Even with PDI looming on our horizon, if your course does not meet the reasonable playing expectations of your membership, then there’s nothing any organization can do to promote any public perception of you to your membership. I realize I have not covered the entire point of the issue, but for many of us just keeping our courses in top shape demands most of our energy and focus.

Thad Thompson
Superintendent, Seneca Falls CC
Seneca Falls, N.Y.

Use This Rag

I, being quite the unconventional superintendent, find your rag to be very refreshing to say the least. There are just far too many stuffy shirts in this business that play everything by the book, not to mention the butt kissing. Just thought you needed to hear that some of us superintendents are loving your stuff. Keep up the good work.

Jerry Whiteaker
Superintendent, Myrtle Creek GC
Myrtle Creek, Ore.

Feel like going postal? We want to hear from you. You can e-mail your letters to Pat Jones at pjohnes@advanstar.com, fax to 440-891-2675 or send them via snail mail to: 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130. Make sure to include your name and phone number for verification. Letters may be edited for length or relevance.

We Messed Up

Ted Cox Jr, superintendent at Running Fox GC, was misidentified as a certified superintendent in Golfdom’s February issue, which he is not. Also, Paul Illgen is the superintendent at Rolling Oaks GC at World Woods in Brooksville, Fla. We mistakenly identified Quinn Kuite as the superintendent in the March issue. While Kuite was superintendent when the story, “Practice Facility Makes Near Perfect,” was written, he left World Woods soon after.

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14-17 Turfgrass 2000
Gainesville, Fla.
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18-19 Golf Course Builders Association of America Summer Meeting
Louisville, Ky.
Contact 919-942-8922

MAY
4 Human Resources Seminar
Sacramento, Calif.
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5-11 ASGCA Annual Meeting
Ireland
Contact 312-372-7090

18 Recycled Water For Turf & Landscape Irrigation
Davis, Calif.
Contact 510-639-1271

18-21 National Club Association Annual Meeting
Washington
Contact 202-822-9822

JUNE
15-16 Warm Season Turfgrass Research Tour
Maricopa, Ariz.
Contact 520-783-2050

26-28 Conference on the Mathematical Modeling of Golf Ball and Club Performance
Bethlehem, Pa.
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28-30 North Central Turfgrass Expo
St. Charles, Ill.
Contact 312-201-0101

JULY
16-18 Texas Turfgrass Summer Conference
Galveston, Texas
Contact 409-690-2201

19-21 Turfgrass Producers International Conference and Expo
Spokane, Wash.
Contact 800-405-8873

AUGUST
9 Ohio Turfgrass Foundation/Ohio State University Research Field Day
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Circle No. 107
Once again, I returned from the GCSAA show with an extensive set of notes about the show. Unfortunately, I couldn't read any of them because — say it with me — "beer and journalism just don't mix."

However, with the help of Dionne Warwick and the Psychic Friends Network, I was able to divine the meaning of some of the gibberish I'd scribbled on the back of cocktail napkins to provide you with the following insights on the big show in the Big Easy.

3-2-1-Launch!

Could any of the 21,000 souls who came to New Orleans have possibly returned home without seeing or hearing the name Golfsat? Fly into town — there's a Golfsat billboard at the airport. Stroll down the street — there's a little Golfsat sign stuck in the ground. Stop for a drink — there's a Golfsat coaster under it. Mother Nature calls — there's a Golfsat sticker over the urinal. You literally couldn't drive, walk, drink or pee without encountering the Jetsonesque Golfsat logo.

This was, by far, the most creative and sophisticated product launch in the history of our happy little industry. Golfsat instantly became players by virtue of sheer marketing chutzpah. But, more importantly, it looks like Golfsat actually has the concept and the capitalization to roll out a serious e-commerce initiative.

Golfsat's dirt-cheap subscription package of hardware, high-speed access and features like DTN is a tempting loss-leader to get you to buy online through the company. Then, when you point, click and spend, Golfsat gets transaction fees from suppliers. There are plenty of others (like the user-friendly Greentrac and, apparently, GCSAA) battling for your eyeballs, but Golfsat's dazzling ad campaign gives it the early lead in the great e-business race.

Don't try this at home

Imagine that you walk up to a woman on the main street of your hometown and say, "I'll give you $500 to expose your chest to me." Now imagine the stinging slap you'd receive or the feeling of handcuffs being tightened around your wrists.

Yet, on one little street in one very odd little city, that same woman will happily bare it all in front of hundreds of total strangers for 20 cents worth of costume jewelry. It truly boggles the mind.

A whimper, not a bang

By all accounts, the Town Hall Meeting about the Professional Development Initiative was a bit of a snoozer. Only about 250 attended and very little of the heated rhetoric that preceded the show was evident (translation: No hitting, spitting or hollering took place). It's now up to the Membership Standards Resource Group to review all of the various comments at a meeting later this month and make a recommendation to the GCSAA Board.

One new twist in the PDI saga: Al Jansen, a member from Wisconsin, has drafted an alternative version of PDI called CDS (Career Development System), which is being hailed by some respected superintendents as a simpler, fairer (and a helluva lot cheaper) way to go. Again, you need to fully explore both of these proposals and make your voice heard through your chapter delegate or an MSRG representative.

Merci beaucoups

That's French for "thanks a lot for not tripping over me while I was passed out in the middle of Bourbon Street." Thanks also to all of you who stopped us to say nice things about Golfdom. The comment we heard most often: "Keep it up." Trust us, kids, we will.